



23 October, 1996

MEMORANDUM FOR: 60 CONSQLGC, Lt Col Small  
60 LSS/LGLOP  
HQ AMC, Chief Willis

FROM: 60 CONSQ/LGCK, SSgt Petersen  
350 Hangar Ave, Bldg 549  
Travis AFB, CA 94535-2632

SUBJECT: AFTER ACTION REPORT (AAR) TDY to Prince Sultan AB, Al-Kharj, Kingdom of Saudi Arabia (KSA)

1. PURPOSE OF TDY: The Contracting goal for this deployment was to provide overall contracting support to all agencies under the 615th TALCE during the support of Operation Southern Watch and Desert Focus.

2. PERSONNEL DEPLOYED: 60 CONSQ/LGC, SSgt Petersen.

3. ITINERARY:

<u>STOPS</u>	<u>DATES</u>
Depart Travis AFB CA	02 Aug 96
Arrive Rein Main AB GE	03 Aug 96
Depart Rein Main AB GE	04 Aug 96
Arrive Prince Sultan AB K.S.A.	05 Aug 96
Depart Prince Sultan AB K.S.A.	23 Sep 96
Arrive Reykjavik AB IC	24 Sep 96
Arrive Dover AFB DE	24 Sep 96
Depart Dover AFB DE	25 Sep 96
Arrive Travis AFB CA	25 Sep 96

4. PREDEPLOYMENT/OBSERVATIONS

I was deployed as a contingency contracting officer to support the 615th TALCE deployed personnel at Prince Sultan AB Al-Kharj, Kingdom of Saudi Arabia (K.S.A.). 615th TALCE was the first to arrive in this location. This office had little advance notice on this mission and from my understanding, this office was not supposed to be tasked. With two hours notice, a contracting officer was selected. It is my understanding also, the Red Horse contracting officer had very little notice. Several maintenance people I spoke with had a weeks notice they were deploying and even showed up for processing in their desert BDUs. A lap top, printer/copier/fax machine was taken as part of the contracting kit. The mission I encountered was a bare base operation with field support from the 4409th Contracting of Eskon Village, KSA located 120 kilometers north. Support was also provided by CENTAF and Dhahran. Everyone did an outstanding job.

## 5. DEPLOYMENT/BUILD-UP

The deployment for contracting was very successful. Due to our location, required products were readily available from the local cities of AL-Kharj (over 100,000 people) and Riyadh (several million people). Additional small commodity items and services were found easily obtainable from local markets, therefore I had great success in providing all items in the time frames established - less than 24 hours. Purchases were made using the SF 44 and DD1155s. Local purchasing was done right from the beginning with local businesses. Cash payments were made on the spot and we developed good credit standing for purchases made by DD 1155s. Payments were made by check for purchase orders, DD1155s from Eskin Village.

Arrived on site on the 5th of August. This was bare base at its best. We all lived and ate out of tents. TALCE commander informed me the entire provisional wing, 4404th from AL-Khobar, Dhahran was going to be moved to this location. I knew at that point, contracting would have an enormous job in front of them. The location we landed at was called Prince Sultan AB. This base is still under construction through the Ministry of Defense. The Saudis are not presently using the facilities and are standing still empty. The finance agent and myself were greeted by a security policeman after we landed and we were whisked off to a site to secure the funds we had in possession. We were taken to the Oscar site which was 20 miles from our location. This was a site where approximately 80 people worked to support the munitions site. In a matter of a few days, this site had over 800 people living and working until Red Horse could set up the tents. I was directed to the only commercial phone available where I made a call to the U.S. Embassy. These people provided me the number to the contracting office at Eskin Village, Riyadh KSA. The personnel at these locations were very helpful and directed me to numerous sources as requirements were moving rapidly. My job was to support the TALCE operation while deployed at this location. I was informed that other contracting people would be assisting in this enormous task.

On the 8th of August, I met with the Red Horse contracting officer, SSgt Sietz who was to take care of all Red Horse requirements. I briefed this individual on sources and points of contact. Though I had no requirement to do so, I teamed up with the Red Horse contracting officer as their requirements were much bigger than the TALCE's requirements. It was evident, the Red Horse could use two contracting personnel. The amount expended for the TALCE was \$18,065.05 and \$1,449,866.00 for the Red Horse operation. The Eskin contracting office, M-Khobar and CENTAF were also purchasing numerous requirements far exceeding the amounts noted. The dollars expended were tracked by CENTAF and Dhahran using their PIIN numbers and their own tracking system with finance. DCATS was used for the separate TALCE funds expended. The Red Horse contracting officer was told before his departure that he was to team up with another contracting activity from the Riyadh office. This did not happen per instructions from CENTAF Director of Contracting. SSgt Sietz and myself were the only two individuals for the first 4 weeks working and living in these conditions locally. All other contracting was done from CENTAF office located in Riyadh, Eskin and Dhahran. This made contracting very difficult as there were too many offices working in different directions. It also made it difficult for all the customer's in the field because they did not know who to deal with at times. Numerous items were being shipped into our location from these sites with no customer's name. Blanket purchase agreements were established with numerous companies prior to the permanent contracting office arrival.

## Accounting and Finance

The 615 TALCE provided their own finance agent. When the Red Horse arrived, they did not have a finance agent to support them. They only had \$10,000 in treasury checks which the supply person was appointed as the paying agent. Red Horse Contracting Officer contacted Director of Contracting , CENTAF the first day they arrived and requested immediate finance support for Red Horse requirements. The Red Horse requirements were coming at us like falling snow flakes. In accordance with direction from CENTAF, Red Horse was to remain at the Prince Sultan AB and temporarily funnel all purchase requests to the Eskin office so they could be funded through their finance office. The Eskin contracting support provided was exceptional and they did an outstanding job. They understood the difficult position Red Horse was in and stepped right up to the plate. Contracting was moving at record speeds at this point. The local finance office did not want to send out an agent in the field to support the Red Horse. This made things very difficult and slowed the process down. My understanding is finance support should be apart of the process from the beginning and not separated like they operated in the theater. Top dollar was not happening at this location. On approximately day 20, a paying agent was provided by the 4404th. This agent lived at Eskin Village in Riyadh and came down in the mornings and left at noon everyday to go back to Eskin where hard billets were available. Unfortunately, as the businesses open at 0800 and close at noon, this was the only time afforded the contracting team by the finance person. There was no push from the top down to get finance to engage the mission. This deterred our ability to complete our own mission. A finance agent should be deployed at all times with a Contracting Officer.

## Communications

Communication proved to be our greatest barrier. No commercial lines existed at the bare base. The only DSN or commercial line available was 20 miles away at the Oscar site. It was located in the security police office. There was a phone line we could call out on but could not receive calls coming into us. Security police had the only incoming line into the site, therefore it made it very difficult to communicate with contractors at the same time without interfering with the security at hand. This also made it difficult to fax requirements as again, security police had the only incoming fax line. Cellular phones did not work in this area but did work in Riyadh. A portable satellite terminal was available but was very expensive. Although our profession demands fast, reliable communications, we opted to use the phone line available in the interim until other communications were made available. By using the available commercial line, this did not delay the contracting process. As cellular phones would not work, it was found that mobile phones did work but at a high cost for rental. The Systems were outdated but reliable. CENTAF approved the rental of these phones but were very expensive. CENTAF should deploy with a portable satellite telephone system in cases where contracting has no communications or very little in our case.

## Security

All incoming cargo, service trucks and deliveries had to be searched and then escorted through the compound in order to complete the delivery. Initially, this caused delays of 6 to 8 hours for contractors. Because of the security threat, the security issue became a new job for everyone involved with the operation. In the first three weeks of the operation, commanders were not willing to sacrifice the people to make it happen. Many people did not work the hours many of other people worked during this mission, therefore, there were people without jobs. This lack of action delayed deliveries and slowed the building process down due to lack of materials. Hundreds of trucks were lined up on a daily basis outside the gate

waiting to be escorted. A logistical nightmare. This got better as the base was building up to its capacity.

## Supply

The first supply operation at Prince Sultan on a large scale was run by the Red Horse. Coordination between the contracting officers and the supply people were very close. They would make daily lists of what had been received in order to track deliveries. Soon after CENTAF arrived, it became necessary to develop a base supply. Coordinated through this supply was done by Red Horse Supply. After careful review of the situation, all deliveries were switched from the Red Horse Supply and moved over to the Base Supply. Base supply did not want to engage the mission right away saying they could not handle the massive flow of commodities and all their other work. This changed after several discussions.

## Sources of Supply

Businesses in this region were very much in tune with the process of U.S. Government contracting and proved to be valuable and very reliable sources. Many companies were still in tact from the Gulf War and were right there to assist. Companies were well versed on the U.S. government contracting requirements and the people spoke excellent English. At times, there were some that spoke broken English, and an interpreter would have been nice. That was a rarity though. There are numerous jobbers in the kingdom ready to assist. Their prices were very competitive in the market and reasonable for the area. A detailed source list has been developed and is in place. The office from Dhahran provided valuable sources of supply also. I became aware of a booklet entitled American Business Resident in Saudi Arabia Directory. This booklet was very valuable and provided numerous sources throughout the kingdom. It provided the American company and the Arabian company. This should be sought after by all HQs and provided for all offices worldwide.

## Language

The companies for the most part spoke impeccable English. Unfortunately, the drivers, construction works and other tradesman did not speak good English.

## 6. SUSTAINMENT

The 4404th Contracting team arrived during the fourth week of this deployment. They were headed by Major Griffin, MSgt Ballero, TSgt Shea and SSgt Chronister. These individuals hit the ground running and did an outstanding job. These people came down from Dhahran and were assisting in the aftermath of the terrible bombing that occurred. They picked up from there from working 17 plus hours per day and came down and did the same thing with our contracting team, myself and SSgt Sietz. These individuals immediately took over the key service contracts (Water, Refuse and Sewage removal) along with a barrage of requests from other permanent party customers. This freed up SSgt Sietz and myself to assist but also to work more closely with my customer, 615th TALCE. All requirements that were worked on were briefed thoroughly and turned over to these individuals prior to our departure.

## 7. REDEPLOYMENT

The 615th TALCE was being replaced by the TALCE unit from McGuire AFB. We ran into several difficulties trying to leave the area due to political aftermath issues, and we were detained for a few extra days. We were replaced on 22 Sep 96 with a departure date of 23 Sep 96. There was no contracting officer assigned with the new TALCE. I briefed the new TALCE commander on how contracting supported the current operation and provided him names and number to the permanent contracting office so their requirements could be fulfilled. We all departed on 23 Sep 96 and headed for Rein Main AB Germany. It was a dream to sleep in a bed again. Departed Rein Main 24 Sep 96 and refueled in Reykjavik Iceland. Departed that afternoon for Dover AFB DE. Stayed the night and arrived at Travis on 25 Sep 96.

## 8. RECOMMENDATIONS

A. My Contracting Warrant when I left was \$25,000.00. This was only increased at my request while out in the field to \$100,000.00. When a contracting Officer is deployed on a contingency, a warrant should be on hand specifically for contingencies that reflect a more appropriate level of contracting in order to handle any type of problem. I recommend a minimum warrant of \$200,000.00 to meet the small purchase limitation.

B. Provide a more timely request for Contracting rather than last minute request (if able to do so.)

C. Ensure a paying agent is always deployed with a Contracting Officer in the case of the Red Horse issue.

D. Possibly combine efforts for contracting rather than numerous separate agencies. This caused confusion among the customers and also the field contracting officers as to whom was handling what.

JOHN E. PETERSEN, SSGT, USAF  
Contracting Officer